

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS**REGULAR MEETING****Monday, January 12, 2004**

Present: Bob Aldrich, June Bailey, Dennis Brunner, Colleen Craig, Glen Dey, *Bobbie Harris

Absent: Janet Miller

Also Present: Karol Schlicher and Allison Hamm, GreenWay Alliance; Francisco Banuelos; M.S. Mitchell; Sharon Fearey, City Council; Teri Dozal, District VI Advisory Board; Rob Younkin, Public Works Department; Mike North, Law Department; Doug Kupper, Larry Hoetmer, and Maryann Crockett (staff)

President Bailey called the meeting to order at approximately 3:32 p.m. The minutes of the regular meeting of December 8, 2003, were reviewed and approved.

1. **Planeview Park**. Director Kupper briefly reviewed the item stating that the issue of replacement land for the 3 acres sold at Planeview Park was discussed at the District III Advisory Board (DAB) meeting on January 7, 2004. He referred to a map of the area and the property located at 3500 S. Cessna consisting of approximately 12-16 acres, which had been suggested by the Planeview Neighborhood Association to replace the land sold. He commented that staff felt this was a better piece of land than the parcel previously suggested at the November meeting and that it would be more conducive to development as a park due to its configuration. He stated that the property has not yet been appraised, pending Park Board and City Council action on the DAB's recommendation.

Bob Aldrich commented that he had attended the Planeview Neighborhood Association meeting prior to the DAB III meeting and he had received the same feedback that the neighborhood preferred the property located at 3500 S. Cessna for replacement purposes. He said their biggest concern was when the property would be developed. He said he advised the group that there were no projections as to when funds would be available to develop the land. He said the group was very enthusiastic about the possibility of developing a park at the location.

President Bailey asked if anyone from the audience wanted to comment on the proposal. The following person spoke regarding the issue:

- **Karol Schlicher, GreenWay Alliance** – stated that she felt the only way to be certain the City was in compliance with the rules of the Land, Water and Conservation Fund program and to qualify for future grants was to get the 3 acres that was sold at Planeview Park back. She added that the City and Park Board already own the acreage at 3500 S. Cessna, and she requested that the entire property be given to the park system. She referred to the map of the area and pointed out that the 3 acres at Planeview served as a pedestrian entranceway into the park from the west. She also added that when the hike/bike trail is rerouted in Planeview Park as proposed, it would cross the entrance driveway into Mr. Norris' development.

On motion by Craig, second by Dey, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to withdraw the motion made at the November 10, 2003 meeting concerning replacement property.

On motion by Craig, second by Aldrich, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to accept the recommendation of the District III Advisory Board of Option 1, which was to reaffirm the sale of the Planeview property and designate the replacement parcel located at 3500 S. Cessna for park purposes.

Responding to a question from President Bailey, Director Kupper explained that the Board and DAB recommendations would be presented to the City Council for review and approval/disapproval. He said if Council approved the recommendations, staff would request a property appraisal.

*Bobbie Harris present.

2. **Land Exchange near Pat Garcia Memorial Park.** Director Kupper introduced Francisco Banuelos, who had proposed a property exchange at Pat Garcia Memorial Park. Mr. Banuelos explained that he would like to exchange a piece of property he owned located south of 25th Street along the Chisholm Creek consisting of approximately 13,300 square feet for a piece of property the City owned as part of Pat Garcia Memorial Park located on North Park Place, consisting of approximately 10,500 square feet in order to build a duplex. He referred to a map of the area provided with the agenda, which depicted both parcels.

Bob Aldrich asked if Pat Garcia Memorial Park was City or Park Board land. Director Kupper explained that although the property was titled to the City, it was acquired after 1992 and specifically donated for park purposes. He said the Park Board would have a recommendation on disposition of the land. Bob Aldrich asked about feedback from the neighborhood association. Director Kupper explained that he wanted to get Park Board input on the request prior to presenting the idea to the neighborhood, DAB VI or contacting the individual who donated that parcel of land for Pat Garcia Memorial Park.

President Bailey asked if there was public access to Mr. Banuelos' property south of 25th Street. Mr. Banuelos explained that there was a dirt road that ran by the property. There was discussion as to whether the road was a public thoroughfare. Director Kupper said he would need to check with Public Works to see if the road had been abandoned. He commented that he felt public access to the property could be provided. He added that the "friends of Pat Garcia group" had advocated the idea of erecting a plaque commemorating Mr. Garcia and identifying the individuals who donated land for the park at the parcel located at the corner of 25th Street North and Wellington Place. He said the remainder of the park, located on the north side of the creek and 25th Street (adjacent to the parcel being requested by Mr. Banuelos) was more of a natural preservation space that had limited public access.

President Bailey commented that Janet Miller, the Park Board District VI representative who could not be present at the meeting, requested that this item be deferred until the February meeting. Allison Hamm, GreenWay Alliance, encouraged the Board to get input from the neighborhood prior to making a decision on the request. Teri Dozal, District VI Neighborhood Assistant, explained that there was no neighborhood association in the area.

On motion by Aldrich, second by Craig, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to defer the item until the February meeting.

3. **Sewer Easement – Edgemoor Park.** Director Kupper introduced Rob Younkin, Public Works. Mr. Younkin referred board members to a map of Edgemoor Park and the surrounding area. He provided project details and explained that the City was requesting a 20-foot permanent sanitary sewer easement along the North line of Edgemoor Park parallel to the library extending to the existing 21-inch interceptor sewer along the creek. He said the current line was old and made of clay pipe. He said the new line would be larger, drain faster, have more capacity and reduce chances of sewer back ups in the area.

Mr. Younkin explained that in addition to the permanent easement, they were also requesting a 40-foot temporary construction easement from South of the library parking to South Eighth Street. He said that the contractor would restore the site after project completion.

President Bailey asked about the project time line and impact on park trees. Mr. Younkin stated that April 30th was the projected completion date. Director Kupper commented that there was minimal tree loss; he said he thought maybe one or two trees. Mr. Younkin said the contractor would replace the trees with the same type of tree, just smaller.

On motion by Aldrich, second by Dey, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to approve the permanent sanitary sewer easement and temporary construction easement requests.

4. **Grove Park Playground.** Director Kupper introduced Larry Hoetmer, Landscape Architect. Mr. Hoetmer referred board members to a map of the playground and a handout, which was a proposed master site plan for the playground submitted by the firm of Site Masters, Inc. He gave a brief overview of improvements to the park to date including the addition of a parking lot at the existing football field, construction of a new football field and parking lot, construction of a new entrance road (and through road) off of Hillside, construction of a parking lot along the new entrance road near Hillside, construction of additional walking paths and placement of additional benches.

Mr. Hoetmer explained that in November, 2003 the City published a request for proposal for a design consultant for the play area. He said the proposed playground design was more unique than other play areas within the City and that it would be located at the east end of the park. He said the District I Coalition provided input into the playground design and that the City provided a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) in the amount of \$119,500 to fund the project. He commented that the play equipment and structures would be custom fabricated.

Mr. Hoetmer said the theme of the playground was historical, educational and environmentally sensitive. He said some of the ideas being considered were fossilized patterns along the pathway, creating a sort of “out door room” seeded with buffalo and other native prairie grasses, and development of a dry creek and other natural elements that would focus on the eco-system. He said the main part of the play area would focus on the historical legacy of the park and its relationship to the Chisholm Trail, Chisholm Creek, the discovery of Indian artifacts in the area and their archeological significance and the agricultural history of the area. He reviewed various proposed play equipment including the bison, chuck wagon, and farm silo. He said there had also been discussion regarding the possibility of an outdoor amphitheater at the park.

Mr. Hoetmer stated that Grove Park and improvements to the area were part of a bigger picture. He referred to the K-96 bike path, Great Plains Nature Center and Chisholm Creek Park. He said one idea being discussed was establishing a trailhead in Grove Park and the addition of a restroom facility and additional parking. He mentioned the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) \$160,000 grant for the trail system. He also mentioned that additional landscaping would be installed along Hillside and the entrance to the park.

Director Kupper related board members concerns about safety issues such as the height of the silo, the open windows, the ability of children to scale the exterior of the structure and whether the safety surface would adequately cushion a fall. Bobbie Harris commented that the City could specify the height of the structure in the design specifications.

Glen Dey remarked about previous negative publicity on Grove Park. He said the District I Coalition was attempting to get area schools involved in development of the park. He mentioned the 200th anniversary of the Lewis and Clark expedition and the anniversary of the Louisiana Purchase, which included the high plains prairie and their historical significance to the area. He said Grove Park was an opportunity to provide educational as well as recreational experiences for youngsters.

Staff explained that the \$119,500 CDBG grant only covered the playground equipment and apparatus. They said safety surfaces increased the project cost to \$153,000. Director Kupper commented that approximately \$43,000 might be available from the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) budget due to savings on other projects and suggested that perhaps that money could be re-directed towards the Grove Park playground project. Responding to a question from President Bailey regarding signage, Director Kupper said the City would be teaming up with the District I Coalition in a public/private partnership to fund that element of the project.

On motion by Dey, second by Aldrich, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to request authorization to expend the \$119,500 CDBG funds for development of the playground, in addition to the approximately \$43,000 surplus from other projects at the park.

Glen Dey thanked Larry Hoetmer and other park staff for their assistance with the project.

5. **Director's Update**. Director Kupper reported briefly on the following item:

- **Removal of Posts and Chains**. M.S. Mitchell stated that he has received a complaint regarding removal of posts and chains along Back Bay Boulevard. He provided board members several pictures of areas with similar posts and chains. He said the individual was concerned that someone would drive into the river and thought that the posts should be replaced for safety reasons. He commented that they had been told that the posts had been removed for ease of access and maintenance.

Director Kupper explained that a park employee slid into the river on a riding mower while attempting to mow around some posts and chains along Stackman Drive. He said employee safety was an issue and added that the posts and chains in many areas have not been maintained and are broken and in various states of disrepair. He said the posts and chains were installed in areas where previously there were no curbs and gutters. He said currently, a vehicle would have to jump the curb before driving into the river. He stated that someone had mentioned that the posts had historical value because the Works Progress Administration had installed them; however, he

said the historical preservation person in the Wichita-Sedgwick County Planning Department was researching that issue.

- MacDonald Park. Staff removed a backstop and dilapidated picnic tables on the east side of MacDonald Park near Eighth Street. Director Kupper said the backstop was actually an attractive nuisance and was too close to the street. He said the picnic tables near the playground equipment would be replaced.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 5:00 p.m.

Janet Miller, First Vice President

ATTEST:

Maryann Crockett, Clerk
Recording Secretary